A DISCOURSE ON SEVEN SCIENCES.

CEREBRAL PHYSIOLOGY, CEREBRAL PSYCHOLOGY, SARCOGNOMY, PSYCHOMETRY, PNEUMATOLOGY, PATHOGNOMY, AND CEREBRAL PATHOLOGY.

An audience answering Milton's definition, "fit though few," with Stephen Pearl Andrews as one of the central figures, assembled at Trenor Hall last evening to celebrate the introduction of a new method in the science of anthropology by Prof. Joseph Rodes Buchanan. The lecture last evening was one of a series of six, and was devoted to an explanation of psychometry, which the lecturer defined as "the power to explore mind, character, and disease, and to reveal the character of the absent and the dead—to discover medicines, poisons, and crimes—to rectify history and biography—to enlarge the boundaries of many sciences—to reveal man's character to himself, and to determine proper associations for life," with sundry other clauses preceded and followed by dashes, and concluded with a quotation from Rev. John Pierpont:

> "Mysterious science that has now displayed
> How fearfully and wonderfully made
> Is man."

In his opening remarks the Professor reviewed the history of his great discovery. In 1835, under the impulse given to the study of brain physiology by Gall and Spurzheim, the fathers of phrenology, the lecturer devoted himself to the verification of the views promulgated by those eminent anatomists, and was for six years engaged in that department of scientific work. Having developed cerebral physiology and cronioscopy according to the method of Gall, and believing this method an unsatisfactory basis for a positive science, he discovered in 1841 the art of exciting the centres of the human brain so as to make them manifest their functions. This was followed by the the discovery of psychometry, which enables its votaries to determine the mental influence of persons with whom they come in contact, and even to discover the psychic influence of any manuscript submitted to them, and to describe the writer. In the course of these inquiries he had (he said) demonstrated that the sympathy between mind and body is an exact science, and to this he had given the name of sarcognomy. In addition, certain experiments had demonstrated to him the laws of operation for the soul itself and of its intercourse with the brain and body, and this science he had styled pneumatology. Certain common mathematical principles, uniting these several sciences in one, and revealing the fundamental laws of expression in oratory and manners, the drama and the fine arts, constituted still another science for which his audience must accept the name of pathognomy. In all, therefore, his system of anthropology involved the seven fundamental sciences of cerebral physiology, cerebral psychology, sarcognomy, psychometry, pneumatology, pathognomy, and pathology.

Having thus defined the scope of his lectures, the Professor handed round some specimens of medicated paper, and some solutions of drugs contained in sealed vials, to demonstrate a theory propounded by him, that it is the force contained in matter, not the matter itself, that exercises an influence as medicine, requesting each person to report the sensations, if any, produced by holding the paper between the palms of the hand for a few minutes. Those who reported a little drowsiness, preceded by gentle stimulation, he pronounced good psychometers, and invited especially to be present for further experiments in autographic psychometry at his next lecture.

The New York Times
Published: March 17, 1878
Copyright © The New York Times